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CASTLES AND
OTHER VERSES:
William Blathwayt.

CASTLES
AND
OTHER VERSES

BY
WILLIAM BLATHWAYT.

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The great majority of the following verses have already appeared in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* and I wish to offer my best thanks to the Editor of that Paper for the permission to reproduce them here.

A few pieces are reproduced by permission of the *Bath Chronicle* to which paper my best thanks are also due.

WILLIAM BLATHWAYT.

August, 1915.

Castles

I BUILT myself a castle in the sand,
Long years ago down by the murmuring sea,
And in my childish fancy idly planned
How I would stay and live in it, and be
A something only children understand.

But one big wave, larger than all the rest.
Rolling against the walls which I had made
Passed over them, and with its snow-white crest
Laid everything in ruins ; so afraid
I ran away, yet was not long distressed.

And once I built a castle in the snow,
Beating the sides till they grew hard as ice,
And shaping them to best withstand the glow
Of the fierce sun, saying—" It will be nice
To sit inside them when the hot winds blow."

Alas ! too soon there came a soft, warm rain,
And snow and hope both melted like a dream ;
My heart was sad, yet did not long complain :
These childish disappointments do but seem
Like shadows flitting over life's bright stream.

CASTLES

I built myself a castle in the air—
The grandest castle human skill could plan ;
I thought my Love would one day enter there
And dwell with me, for now I was a man,
And she to me the fairest of the fair.

I told my Love ; and all the stately towers,
The buttresses, the walls, each separate stone,
Crashed down in chaos on the wasted hours
That I had spent in building ; now alone
This heart remains. Shall it for ever moan
Over Time's withered leaves and faded flowers ?

The Iceberg's Song.

I AM an iceberg ; ha, ha !

See how I glisten sharp and cold ;
The bitter Arctic seas have rolled
Around my sides ; I am old, old !
I sprang at first from the pure white snow
That fell in Greenland years ago ;
Then I crept as a glacier dark and slow,
To the open sea, where the wild winds blow,
And the billows toss grandly to and fro ;
The seas are warm, but I am cold ;
I weep in the sun, I am old, old !
I tower gaunt and dark in the gloom ;
The stateliest ship I can bring to its doom,
And send men down to a watery tomb.
I am an iceberg ; ha, ha !

March

DOWN the deserted streets the drizzling rain
Is driven by the wind, which howls and moans
Around the houses like a thing in pain ;
Till cheerless day succeeds a cheerless night,
And dawn breaks slowly on the wet cold stones.
Yet this is March, the opening month to Spring,
The month of promise, hope, and pure delight,
When first the valleys glow with daffodils,
And the snow melts on all the lower hills,
Swelling the waters in the burbling brook
Almost to overflowing. Birds now sing
In such clear joyous trills that every nook
And corner has become a glorious home
Of perfect happiness. So let your voice
Ring too with gladness, seeing we may roam,
In fancy through these valleys and rejoice.

Verses to Progress

NOW that the last breath of the passing year
Is growing faint and soon will die away,
Now when the Spring is once more drawing near,
When youth and warmth and splendour re-appear
Like some bright, sunny ray,
Which bursts—a blaze of glory—through dark clouds ;
Now is the time our thoughts should turn to thee,
Oh, sovereign Progress ! Darkness yet enshrouds
Our fettered minds, that struggle to be free
And strive and yearn to reach those nobler things
To which they cannot soar, lacking the wings
For such a lofty flight. Yet let us not
Despair, but try the harder in the years
That lie before us, seeking to allot
To every day its task. Thus shall our lives
At least be freed from all ignoble fears,
Since we shall feel that the Eternal Laws
So will it, that our good work still survives
Long after death, to carry on the cause
Of universal progress.

A Plain Man's Question to a Fossil

HOW many thousand, thousand years have past
Since thou wast first embedded in this rock
And felt no more the shock,
Nor heard the noisy roar
Of the tempestuous billows on the shore?
Come, speak and say
What was the world like in thy day?
Did some fresh cooling breeze
Stir the Silurian seas,
When the bright sunbeams fell upon thee last?
Or hast thou seen the monsters of the deep,
That lived in those strange climes,
At whose vast bones the idly curious peep,
In the museums of these modern times?
Or did'st thou lead a life of solitude,
Retiring and alone,
Where none could come to worry or intrude?
Oh, what strange changes o'er the world have crept
Whilst thou hast slept
In this old lump of stone!
How proudly men sing of their petty deeds
And transient creeds;
Yet even as the wind by some dark river—
Unconscious whence it blows—
Stirs the tall reeds and makes the water quiver.
So man, too, comes and goes.
Hast heard of Isis or Osiris? Nay?
Well maybe they were later than thy day,
Whilst thou hast slept, they came and passed away.
Only the stars and sun and moon shine on,
And sink behind the sea,
Just as they did with thee;
And all the rest?—are going, or have gone.

The Plymouth Express

CLATTERING, rattling through the night,
The Plymouth express comes rushing on.
How many faces, pale and wan—
Faces that should be young and pretty—
Are borne along in that clattering train ?
The sleepers beat out a continuous ditty,
A steady, monotonous, ceaseless refrain,
That seems to form words to the dull tired brain :
“ Do be quick ! Do be quick ! Do be quick ! Do be quick ! ”
Over and over and over again.
How many happy and how many heart-sick,
Thus borne along through the wind and the rain,
Seek to find pleasure or solace from pain ?
“ Do be quick ! Do be quick ! Do be quick ! Do be quick ! ”
So they rush on to the infinite main.

* * *

A clatter, a rumble, a long stream of light,
And the Plymouth express flashes into my sight
To vanish again, swallowed up in the night.

The Dawn

THE sleeping world is strangely still
Under the deep, dark mantle of night,
And stars alone throw a feeble light
On a land that is damp and chill.

Until, low down in the eastern sky,
There comes a pale, faint transient glow,
And the farm-yard cocks begin to crow
To tell that the day is nigh.

And next the East begins to flush,
First pink, and then bright, rosy red,
Till the stars that are shining overhead
Grow faint in the heaven's blush.

And lastly the dew shines white on the lawn,
The swallows, too, twitter under the eaves,
The sunbeams peep through a thousand leaves—
It is dawn.

The Song of the Wind

AWAY! away! over mountain and hill,
Past hamlet and village and town,
By the deep flowing river and old ruined mill
To the bracken and heath on the down;
Over forests and plains where the larch trees grow,
Past long white stretches of dazzling snow,
Which at eventide shine with a warm pink glow,
I sweep.

I carry the clouds far over the land,
And sigh as I pass through the trees;
I toss the breakers on to the sand
When I howl on the angry seas.
Then all night, under the starry sky,
Away for ever and ever I fly;
I sink at times, but I never die—
I sleep.

Three Friends

DARLING, when the flowers of life are faded,
When the summer is a long-gone dream ;
When to us with footsteps worn and jaded,
Things no longer look what now they seem ;
When at last the bitter wintry weather
Drops down snowflakes from the leaden sky,
Then we three old friends will go together—
Love, and you, and I.

The White Heather

THIS is the sweetest flower that grows,
Here on the wild hillside ;
Many have sung of the lily and rose,
Yet both lily and rose have died
Before the white heather has bloomed.
Let those who to sadness are doomed,
On whom no pleasures fall,
Seek to forget their sorrow and care,
And come to the glorious mountain air,
Where the white heather reigns over all.

If It Were True.

IF it were true that love could never alter,
That youth could never age, nor beauty fade ;
If it were true that faith could never falter,
And boy be ever boy, and maid be maid.
If to be good were more than to be clever,
And all were paid according to their due ;
Would not death seem a harder blow than ever,
If this were true ?

Tears

BRIGHT golden tears and shining eyes,
What secret hidden sorrow lies
In that fair face I love so well ?
Is it a grief I can dispel,
A sadness that may pass in sighs
And golden tears ?
Come, merry smile, to those red lips—
See how the dark hair softly whips,
With its dishevelled ends her face ;
Hair that will never stop in place,
But ever waves and flaps and flips—
Come, merry smile.

Remembrance

LONG years ago, when all the world seemed glowing
Bright with the sunny dreams that childhood brings ;
When in my heart the joy was overflowing,
That from a happy life forever springs ;
When butterflies round every flower fluttered,
And snow-white clouds speckled the dark blue sky,
A fairy came to me and softly uttered
These words :—" Love cannot die."

And now when summer days are almost ended,
And those sweet dreams of childhood are but dreams ;
Now that Life's joy is so with sorrow blended,
That shadows half obscure its fairest beams ;
Still in my heart those three sweet words kept ringing,
Just as they rung in days so long gone by,—
Words that the angels round you now are singing
" Love cannot die."

The Squirrel

I SAW a sweet little squirrel play
On a dewy lawn at break of day ;
It scampered merrily here and there,
Over the grass and under the trees,
Which the hand of Autumn had made so brown
That at every stir in the cold fresh air
The crisp dry leaves came fluttering down.
But the squirrel paid no heed to these——
And I felt, although the summer was fled
And all the lilies and roses dead,
That Heaven oft grants to life a joy
Which the bitterest winter can ne'er destroy.

England

HOW fair is my home,
The land of my birth !
Though fated to roam,
How fair is my home !
Round thy shores the seas foam,
Dearest country on earth——
How fair is my home.
The land of my birth !

If Thou Wert Mine

IF thou wert mine, then would I shelter thee
And clasp and guard thee like a treasured flower;
Or if it chanced that we should disagree,
And frowns upon thy lovely face should lour,
Then, Sweet, thy angry heart I would entwine
Till it again were mine.

If thou wert mine, then would I hold thee fast
To tell thee all the vastness of my love;
No single cloud should rest to overcast
The brightness of thy joy; but far above
The quarrels of this world our lives should shine,
If thou wert mine.

If thou wert mine; forgive me, Love, the dream,
For life itself is not more dear than thou;
If thou wert mine, my praise of thee should gleam
In thoughts undreamt of by my fancy now;
And all my heart should be for ever thine,
If thou wert mine.

Three Aspects of Nature

WHICH do you like the best——

The mountains, the woods, or the sea ?
The tall rocky peaks, round which the wind shrieks ;
While the snowflakes fly, so light and dry,
That they hardly ever seem to lie
On the mountain's icy crest,
But are whirled again far into the sky
Before they can come to rest ?
Or would you wander free
Beneath many a stately tree,
Over broken stumps and mossy ground,
With wild wood-flowers all around,
Where the world keeps silence, save for the sound
Of the bird or the humming bee ?
Or by the bleak sea-shore,
Where the long waves roll and roar,
Where the spray is dashed up into your face,
And sunshine and shadow appear to chase
Each other across the sand,
And fly along at a frantic pace,
Like some weird spectres of the place,
Till they vanish over the land ?

Memories

I PICTURE still the woods where once we played,
The overhanging trees, the gleams of light
That flickered strangely in the leafy glade,
The silver birches with their stems all white
That shone and glimmered in the gloomy shade,
The fleeting hours, the too-swift fall of night,
The darkness which I fain would have delayed,
That came to steal your beauty from my sight.

I picture all ; I see your tender eyes
Still gazing on me in that living past ;
I feel the little hand that lightly lies
So soft and white in mine. No wintry blast
Can tear away the memories that I prize
So dearly. Clear and brilliant to the last
The sun is shining from the summer skies,
Whose depth of blue no clouds can overcast.

Sleep and Death

To be silent ; to rest

Beneath some quiet spot where flowers are growing,
Where, when the day is fading from the West,
The crimson and the golden lights are glowing,
Where the blue violets at the blue sky peep—
This is to sleep.

To dwell amongst the restless, busy throng
Forgotten, scorned, neglected and alone,
Bitterly brooding on a sense of wrong—
Passing through life unnoticed and unknown,
With not one friend to heed a hopeless sigh—
This is to die.

To a Little Girl Whom I Met on a Cross- Channel Steamer

MAY I, May, in your month of May—

In the spring of your life when all is gay
As flowers that dance on a sunny day,
When the breezes blow the dark clouds away—
Write a few words that I want to say ?

Now you are back in your happy home,
Where the wild waves roll and burst in foam ;
You remember, I told you of this before,
How they come just once, but then nevermore,
So let us forget what we both deplore.

I wonder, should years and years roll by
Ere we two meet again, you and I,
That if we then met, through God's decree,
Should I know you or would you know me ?
Little Pearl of the Sea.

Solitude

I HAVE wandered alone through a barren and desert land,
I have stood on the bank of a river that winds to no sea,
I have watched the bright waters sink, lost in an ocean of sand
Without grass or tree.

But here in the city amidst all the roar and the din,
I long to be back once again where the mournful winds moan ;
For the sun and the stars and the air and the sky are my kin,
And their life is my own.

Frost in May

JACK Frost last night came stealing forth,
Back from the regions of ice and snow—
To which he had fled three months ago—
Back from the bitter north.

He came at the close of the bright clear day,
And the blossoms drooped in his icy breath
And sank in a dreamless sleep to death,
Ere the morning drove him away.

But the sun sprang up in anger and grief,
And his rays were keen and sharp as a knife ;
Jack Frost was forced to fly for his life.
And hide from the day like a thief.

The Liner

GRANDLY the liner rears her stately form,
Cleaving the ocean billows as some Queen
Might spurn them with her foot ; the wildest storm
Seems powerless to harm her, and the foam
Falls from her sides in flecks of whitish-green.
The ocean—is the ocean not her home ?
What does she care for storm or wind or wave ?
And yet, despite her proud and fearless mien,
The ocean is her grave.

For suddenly, maybe, a sister ship
Drives from a bank of fog and with a crash
Crumples her up like paper ; scarce a splash
Has marked the impact, and the vessels slip
Once more apart ; the wireless waves next flash,
Over the water urgent calls for aid ;
The wind—who fears the wind ? Hardly a breath
Disturbs the air ; yet still these calls are made :
“ S.O.S.———S.O.S.———S.O.S.——— ”

Death.

The Question

HERE, where the mournful willows weep and droop over
the river,

Here let me seek to forget the words that are rending my heart ;
Hark how the sparkling water murmurs its musical ditty,
Telling of freedom and joy deep in the breast of the wave.

Thus flow our rivers of life onward by banks decked with
flowers,

Cold and dark are their currents hurrying fast to the sea ;
But when their waters have merged in the infinite waves of
the ocean——

Ah ! will she then clasp my hand ? Will she then love me ?
perhaps.

Evening

THE light is fading ; in the western sky
The golden tints have deepened into red ;
Light gusts of air amongst the branches sigh,
Through which the stars peep shyly overhead,
And it is there, far in the glimmering West,
On which the sun still faintly casts its beams—
Yes, it is there my heart would seek to rest ;
There with the sweet ideal of my dreams.

So here is a song, and none too long,
Sung for the Queen of the West ;
For the night is come and the world is dumb,
But little I care so the night is fair
With her whom I love the best,
For she is my Queen and has ever been
The Queen of the crimson West !

The light is fading ; soon the world will sleep ;
Yet in the West can still be traced the gleam
Of this past day ; my spirit now can leap
To her I love, to all I most esteem.
No ocean is so wide but we can think
Of those who dwell upon the farther shore ;
The very distance only serves to link
Two hearts together closer than before.

EVENING

So sing again the old refrain
To the noblest and the best ;
For the star of love still shines above
The home of the brave—the rolling wave ;
And when it sinks to rest,
Then my heart will fly along the sky
To its home in the darkening West.

A Lyric

BOY and girl, girl and boy,
Joy and laughter, laughter and joy ;
Hand-in-hand they trip along,
Singing an old forgotten song ;
Over their heads the swallows whirl—
Girl and boy, boy and girl.

Truth with beauty, beauty with truth,
Youth with maiden, maiden with youth ;
There they sit, in a glowing dale,
Telling the never-forgotten tale ;
Showing once more to the blue above,
Love undying, undying love.

Exmoor

COME, let us leave this smoky city,
This world of rumbling and unrest ;
Our Exmoor hills are wild and pretty,
Secluded, charming, and romantic,
Grey with the mists from the Atlantic,
Sweet with the sweetness of the west.

And we will wander there together,
Lit by the pale and misty moon ;
And standing on the open heather,
To view the dark clouds swiftly flying,
Shall hear the mournful night-wind sighing—
And thou shalt be my “Lorna Doone.”

A Seagull's Song.

OVER the sea I sweep,
From wave to wave I leap ;
The clear blue water reflects the sky.
I hover and wheel and swoop and fly,
Then fall—with a broken and weird cry
To rest on the breast of the deep.

But on a stormy day
I turn and fly away.
I leave the waves and the cliffs and sand
To seek a refuge far inland,
Till the wind has been lulled to sleep,
And the foam drops home in the deep.

Ideals

I KNOW not what they are—I only know
They draw my longing soul with subtle spell ;
I know not how they come, nor why they go ;
Nor can I tell
If in some distant star they dwell impearled,
Or deep in caverns far beneath the ground.
They are but dreams of noble thoughts, not found
In our crude world.

The River

WINDING down through pasture land,
From lonely moors of dark brown peat,
Past long low banks of silver sand,
With rushes growing on either hand,
To where it ripples at my feet.

And under trees that warmly glow
With varied shades of orange-red,
Where gleams of sunlight come and go,
Like spirits moving to and fro,
When soft winds stir the leaves o'erhead.

And onward past the grey stone walls
And ancient bridges of the town,
To where the noisy water brawls
And glides and foams and leaps and falls
And breaking rushes madly down.

Till out at last in the open sea
It springs with joy to meet the waves ;
Locked in their hearts it yet is free,
Chained by the love of liberty——
A love that maketh all things slaves.

SONNETS

To England's Aerial Fleet

QUEEN of the waves and mistress of the air,
For both proud titles must be held by thee,
Lest both be lost ;—great champion of the free
Land of the strong and guardian of the fair,
What is it that thy children will not dare
In thy behalf ? Would they not grieve to see
The men who ought to govern, turn and flee
From duty, to inaction or despair ?

Dear land awake, the hour for sleep is past ;
Act now and leave no needed work undone,
Aye, act at once, for “ soon ” may be too late ;
The other lands are moving ; see how fast
The airships slip their moorings one by one ;
Is this the chosen time to rest or wait ?

(Written in 1913.)

To Time

I STOOD upon the wild seashore alone,

And gazed around in silence on the scene—

The long flat sands, the breakers cold and green,
All flecked with white ; and then the long low moan
Of the dark waters, and the high shrill tone
Of the strong wind, that blew cutting and keen,
And whistled in my ears ; all these have been
Through untold ages, that no man has known.

Oh, Time, vast ocean with no further shore,

I gaze upon thee with a nameless dread.

Lonely art thou : on thy tremendous wave

I feel myself a babe for evermore ;

Thou art the home of all the mighty dead,

Of all the Living thou wilt be the grave.

The Value of Books

NOT in the glories of the month of May,

When clouds within the azure sky grow rare,
When Spring has made the plainest plant look fair,
And the whole world seems young and full of play ;
Nor in the brilliance of a summer's day,
When the red roses scent the heavy air,
And youths and maidens laughingly repair
Into the fields to toss the new mown hay.
But on a long wet dreary winter's night
When the wind drives the sleet against the panes,
Or howls around the chimneys, then we feel
The value of our books as they reveal
The wide world of romance, for our delight.
And call forth Beauty from its vast domains.

To Action

HOW many lives are being dreamt away

That gave such promise at their welcomed birth—
Lives that were meant to show such noble worth,
That the whole world were better for their sway?
How many hours are wasted day by day
In drowsy indolence or senseless mirth—
Moments that should be fruitful, turned to dearth,
Devoid of honest work or healthful play?

Oh! let us see that all our time is spent
In useful actions that will bring forth good,
In steady work and ceaseless stern endeavour.
Oh! let us show that we have understood,
In the brief path down which our steps are bent,
That time once lost is lost, alas! for ever.

To Fire

Dread, awesome power, so fearful in thy might,
Whose ruddy flames gleam on the cold sea-wave,
Or underground build up a fiery grave
For those who toil in everlasting night ;
How terrible the intermittent light
Cast by thy flame is, only they that brave
The scorching heat and smoke to nobly save
A fellow creature's life can tell aright.

Yet sacred be the fire in kindred hearts,
The sympathy that stirs each tender breast,
The pity felt for them who hope no more.
God comfort all who Death so rudely parts
From those they love ; on no far-distant shore
All shall re-meet in perfect peace and rest.

To War

WAR, cruel war, how many noble hearts

Have been for ever stilled through serving thee ?
That " Might is Right " was ever thy decree ;
Death is thy friend, and hurls his pointed darts
To right and left, and pitilessly parts
Mother from son ; even a sweetheart's plea
Goes unregarded ; can'st thou not foresee
Love's unforgotten wound that ever smarts ?

And we, we men who claim to have a soul,
Who say that reason is our guide in life,
We, we it is that make thee, wretched war ;
For still with no true object aim or goal,
Men pour forth seas of blood in endless strife ;
Must they thus vainly strive for evermore ?

To the Lightning

NO breath of wind is felt, the stifling air
Is void of life, till from the gathering gloom—
Where the dark clouds in the dull heavens loom—
Thou springest with one brilliant dazzling glare.
Terrible Goddess, swift, startling and fair,
All those that meet thee meet in thee their doom !
Again thou springest, lighting up my room,
Putting to shame the taper's feeble flare.

May it not be that in this sultry world
The sword, like thee, must flash now and again ;
That ere the war-flag be for ever furled,
Or the deep thunder of the guns can cease,
Wild storms must rage, and with fresh, cooling rain
Render this earth more fit for lasting peace ?

To —

HERE, where the slanting sunbeams strike this lake,
Marking its surface with a crimson ray
Of blood-red light ; here, at the close of the day,
How often have we pushed through fern and brake,
To stand and idly watch the lithe grass snake
Wriggle amongst the sedge, and glide away
Into the rushes, whilst the ripples play
A fairy's lullaby for your sweet sake ?

My one, my own, may our love ever be
As pure and true as now ; may this our life
Close with the beauty of yon setting sun,
Which casts its last bright beams o'er you and me !
Thus may we, knowing nought of senseless strife,
Go hand in hand when our brief day is run.

To the Moon

PALE Queen of Night, that casts a ghostly ray
In at my window, so that this my room
And all the objects in it seem to loom
Like phantoms through the darkness ; who can say
What weird strange sights thy distant lands display,
What valleys and old craters plunged in gloom,
Where deathly silence, deeper than the tomb,
Reigns o'er a scene of ruin and decay ?

And yet, ah yet, I love thee, sweet pale Queen,
For thou art constant, where all others change :
Seeing in thee what as a child I saw,
I dream again of all I might have been,
Forgetting what I am : is it then strange
That I should love, though with a half-felt awe ?

To Music

WHEN I am feeling downcast, lonely, sad,
Thou comest oft to charm away my care.
Of all sweet things thou art most truly fair ;
On hearing thee my heart once more is glad.
Oh, there is nought else, on this earth, can add
Such joy to life as thou, such rapture rare ;
When thou art present who could feel despair
Who then remember ought of what is bad ?

Music ! I hear thee in the rustling leaves ;
Thy voice is in the murmuring of the sea ;
Thy spirit haunts the clear cold mountain rill ;
The twitters of the birds beneath the eaves
Are fairy notes now being sung by thee :
Pray God that after death thou singest still.

To the Jungfrau

THOU standest, lifting high thy lovely crest,
Clad in a cloak of everlasting snow,
On which the evening sunbeams warmly glow,
Changing the white to pink. Deep in the west
The sun, in flaming crimson, sinks to rest
Behind a lake, from which the waters flow,
Seeming to gently murmur as they go,
At leaving thus a scene so sweet and blest.

Thine is a splendour that no words can tell,
Thine is a beauty that no pen can trace,
And when a veil is drawn across thy face,
To hide it from my too admiring eyes,
Alone in calm seclusion thou wilt dwell
Beneath the blue of the eternal skies.

(Written at Interlaken).

To Church Bells

WHEN on the wintry wind the fitful sound
 Made by far-distant bells strikes on the ear,
So faintly, that we feel rather than hear,
And all is silent in the air around,
Save that the dead leaves rustle on the ground
As barren Nature mourns the dying year ;
When Life and Death seem both so very near,
Yet both are linked with mysteries profound :

Methinks at such a time the early days
Of long-forgotten childhood half return,
Borne in a wave of memories vague but vast.
Methinks at such an hour in unknown ways
Our restless wandering spirits seem to yearn
To hold communion with the times long past.

VERSES DEALING WITH
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In Memoriam : Joseph Chamberlain

ALTHOUGH, alas ! the world has been bereft

Of one whose place no other man can fill,
Mourn not the noble spirit that has left
This earthly sphere, for it is with us still.
Strong in the strength of his unconquered will,
It rests with us to carry on the fight,
And, undeterred by any transient ill,
To battle bravely for old England's right,
Nor falter now when victory lies almost in sight.

Behind his breast there beat a human heart.
Remember wealth, position even life,
All were forgotten, as he stood apart
To throw his very soul into the strife,
To war with worn-out theories to the knife ;
And when struck down by illness at the last—
Ceaselessly tended by a loving wife—
His mighty spirit proved itself too vast
To show dejection that his mortal powers had passed.

Yet mourn him not ! The Empire that he served
Is the most fitting tribute to his name ;
The Duty, too, from which he never swerved
Must be his lasting monument of fame ;

IN MEMORIAM : JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN

Let those who scorned him hang their heads for shame.
Would he had lived to see the battle won,
The goal attained, which had been his life's aim ;
But let him now sleep on bemoaned by none,
Why should we weep for him whose work is surely done ?

In Memoriam : Alfred Austin

A NOTHER voice is mute and sings no more,
L ost in that silence which must come to all ;
F rom the deep past the brilliant tones of yore
R ing muffled ; yet we seem to hear them call,
E choing in the future. Oh, speak low ;
D ead are the roses that we used to know.

A nd yet, methinks, those roses bloom again
U nder another sky, more blue than ours ;
S oftly the raindrops fall in summer showers,
T hat fleecy clouds bear from the boundless main ;
I dare not grieve that Time has stilled thy hand,
N ow thou hast past into that brighter land.

In Memory of H.M.S. Bulwark

WHO thus can die through death shall live for ever ;
Death does but lift them to immortal fame ;
The day must come to all when time will sever
The thread of life and leave but deeds and name—
Name which in course of years must surely vanish,
Long e'er the stars have faded from the sky ;
Deeds that no time, no destiny, can banish—
The deeds that never die.

In Memory of H.M.S. Formidable

FARE-WELL, brave friends ! the billows of the ocean
May still your hearts, but cannot quench your souls ;
And though your loss is felt with deep emotion,
Ours is a sadness in which love condole.
The blows men strike for freedom are undying ;
The flag of Liberty shall ne'er be furled,
And England's sailors help to keep it flying
For all the world.

The Union Jack

HONOUR the Union Jack ! Honour the British Flag !

Thousands of times in the wind and breeze
It has fluttered over the stormy seas ;
St. George, St. Andrew, St. Patrick—all these
In our national banner are blended,
A flag that Nelson defended
At the battle of Trafalgar.
A flag for which Gordon gave his life ;
Yet a flag of Peace e'en more than strife,
Which none may besmirch or mar.

Honour the Union Jack ! Honour the British Flag !
For the flag should take precedence of all—
Let us answer, my lads, to our country's call,
“ United we stand, divided we fall,”
And Empire counts before party.
True Britons are strong and hearty,
And fear no foe's attack.
The foe may be bold, but they are bolder,
Marching firmly shoulder to shoulder,
Under the Union Jack.

Christmas Thoughts for 1914

SPIRIT of Christmas and the dying year,
Give ear !

The times are troubled ; nations are at strife ;
All the old sanctity of human life
Has been forgotten ; pain and sorrow come
In place of joy, and merriment is dumb.
The roasting chestnuts crackle as of yore,
And yet our hearts are sore,
Mourning for those who will return no more.

Spirit of Christmas and the dying year,
Give ear !

We know we have not fought this fight in vain ;
We know that peace and joy will come again ;
That when our children's children laugh and play
Around the Christmas tree, old folk will say :
“ Our fathers died to leave these children free,
To make their land a home of Liberty.”

England's Heroes.

DECEMBER, dark December,

Thou and the year must surely die together,
Die in the darkness of the wintry weather,
Whilst we who stay behind we shall remember.
Thousands have fallen, thousands of our bravest ;
Hundreds of thousands have remained to sorrow ;
Think not their silent tears will cease to-morrow,
Though they forgive thee for the pain thou gavest.
Thousands have fallen ;—the bright stars above them
Shine down at night upon their unmarked graves—
Thousands are buried in the cold wild waves—
All are old England's Heroes, and we love them.

(December, 1914.)

To 1915

WELCOME, New Year !

Thou hast been born to trouble and much pain ;
But many a day begun in storm and rain
Has ended calm and clear.

Welcome, New Year !

Bring but our Lads victorious home again
(To show the world they have not fought in vain)
Before the leaves are sear.

Our friends, though far away, are yet so near—
Near to our hearts—and near they will remain ;
So guard and keep them through this wild campaign,
Dearest New Year.

TRANSLATIONS

FREE TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GERMAN.

From Goethe's "An Die Entfernte"

SO have I truly lost thee, dear?

Art thou, oh fairest, from me flown?

Still rings in the accustomed ear

Each tender word, each gentle tone,

As one at morn with upturned face

Will seek to pierce the air in vain,

When hidden in the deep blue space

The lark pours forth its sweetest strain.

So up and down my anxious gaze

Will roam o'er field and copse and tree;

And all my songs and broken lays

Cry—"Come, Beloved! back to me."

The Two Sparrows

A SPARROW perched upon a gate ;
Close beside him sat his mate ;
And he spoke thus to his wife ;
“ Kiss me, oh, my dearest life ! ”

“ Cherry trees will blossom soon,
Springtime always is auspicious ;
How I love bright May and June,
When the peas are so delicious ! ”

“ But,” she answered, “ it were best
Firstly to perform our duty ;
Let us bulld ourselves a nest,
Ere we think too much of beauty.”

“ Building nests,” the sparrow said,
“ Hatching eggs, besides all other
Work, like seeing young birds fed,
Is the duty of the mother.”

“ Oh, you wretch ! ” his mate retorted ;
“ Must I work myself to death,
Whilst your time is all disported
Twittering away your breath ? ”

THE TWO SPARROWS

“ Let me tell you here, at leisure,”
He replied, “ to quell all strife,
That the husband lives for pleasure,
And leaves duty to his wife.”

(From Karl. A. Mayer.)

A Starry Night

SEE, where the great broad shining ocean lies,
How one by one the stars sink out of sight ;
Yet opposite for every star that dies
Another softly rises, not less bright.

Then let us learn a lesson from the skies,
And cease because of death to idly fret ;
In order that fresh lives and thoughts may rise,
The old must set.

(From Adolf Bube.)

Unknown

“OH! wretched life, oh efforts vain!

To be forgotten seems my lot;

Even my best and noblest strain

Is written for I know not what.

I work and give my time for nought,

Whilst all unknown my verses lie;

The lines that with such pains I wrought,

Are gazed on by no other eye,”

Whilst sadly thus the poet spoke,

Undreamt of, in a distant land,

A girl reclined beneath an oak,

Holding his verses in her hand.

His book is such a treasured thing,

She keeps it under lock and key;

“Who thus,” she thinks, “can write and sing,

Oh, God! How happy he must be.”

(From Ernest Rauscher.)

The Farmer and His Son

THE farmer gazes on his field ; his hand
He passes slowly o'er his knitted brow ;
He mutters : " I have chosen well the land,
And sowed the seed most carefully ; yet now
In spite of all a thousand weeds appear ;
Some wicked Devil must have placed them here ! "

Suddenly, laughing merrily, his boy
Comes running laden with gay-coloured flowers.
" See, Father, see ! " he cries with shouts of joy,
" The lovely poppies in this field of ours ;
Look how they seem to glisten in the sun ;
The dear, dear God has planted every one."

(From Julius Sturm.)

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